

THE MANIPUR WAR.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MANIPUR FROM THE EARLIEST
PERIOD TO THE EXECUTION OF SENAPATI
TEKENDRAJIT AND THE
TONGAL GENERAL.

EDITED AND PUBLISHED

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PREFACE.

IN preparing this book I have principally drawn upon the *Imperial Gazetteer* and some other books that have treated on Manipur. My best thanks are therefore due to the authors of those books. I have also worked on the facts that have now and then appeared in the principal newspapers in this country and in England, and the series of correspondence that the Government of India has, from time to time, published for the information of the public. As the book aims at presenting events in Manipur in a connected form, I hope it may be of some service to the public.

CALCUTTA,
September, 1891.

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S. N. MITRA.

THE MANIPUR WAR.

CHAPTER I.

THE INTRODUCTION.

MANIPUR is bounded on the north by the Angámi country, and the hills overlooking the valley of Assam ; on the west by Cachar ; on the east, by the Kubo Valley and part of Upper Burma ; on the south, the boundary is undefined, and abuts on the country inhabited by the various tribes of Lushais, Kukis and Sutis. The State consists principally of an extensive valley, situated in the heart of a mountainous country, which stretches between Assam, Cachar, Burma and Chittagong. Its view, as seen from the crest of the Limatol Range, is both very beautiful and striking. Looking east and stretching north and south from the visitor's feet, a vast plain expands, interspersed with rounded hills, sparkling lakes, amongst which lake Logtakh is beautiful and large, and winding sluggish rivers, while far away to the east, the panorama is closed in by rugged blue mountains, known as the Hirok ranges, which like the Limatol, extend almost in meridional direction. At both extremities, the fertile plain is hemmed in by the central hillocks, which rise higher and

higher until they unite with the Limatol and Hirok ranges, thus presenting the appearance of a verdant land-locked basin. Bright green rice-fields set off with clumps of dark-foliaged trees and feathery bamboos, mark the sites of scattered villages. A long straight path is seen to run from a small village and police station known as Bishenpore at the foot of the Limatol Range for 12 miles, to what appears as a dense forest. This is the capital of the state—Imphal. The eye loses the detail of this somewhat monotonous expanse as the road dwindles into a mere gray line which is seen to be carried across the silvery tributary streams which descend from the Limatol mountains. Neither spires nor chimneys, cut the blue sky, nor is smoke observed to ascend from the sylvan scene of the capital. Nothing, in fact, bespeaks the busy home of 30,000 to 40,000 people; and yet hidden away among these trees is the palace of the Raja, and hard by are the houses of his favourites—each family having a large enclosure around the homestead. Imphal, the capital of Manipur, may be described as a city of villages, or rather suburban residences, around the palace. Straight wide roads lined with trees, frequently intersecting each other at right angles, afford the means of communication; but neither shop, artisan, nor wheeled conveyance exists in the city. Unique of its kind, the capital of Manipur was a royal residence dedicated to luxury and amusement. All were quite happy.

They lived a simple joyous life amid a rude plenty, unconcerned with the turmoil or the bustle of the world. The streets were crowded with smiling healthy faces, in which few bore the marks of toil and labour. The children scamper after each other with merry shouts or besport themselves in juvenile mimicry of the games and the amusements of their fathers. There are no schools in the state, and education, therefore, is very backward. Court favor and promotion were secured by success in the manly game of hockey on horse-back, which was formerly almost peculiar to that country, but has now become popular in India and England under the familiar name of polo.

The women from distant villages repair on certain days to the capital, or to other recognised centres. Each carries on her head a neat square basket, containing the surplus stock of the homestead—the fruits of her industrial skill or of her husband's agricultural knowledge. On reaching the market place, the contents of these baskets are exposed, and exchanged or bartered, when each returns again to her family, carrying off the results of her loud and hotly contested exchange. On market days, the long straight roads from Bishenpore to Imphal, may be seen crowded by groups of women, hurrying to and fro, while the merry laugh is made to beguile the otherwise dreary march.

The population as shewn in the Census of 1881

is 221,070 ; the majority of which are cultivators, 15,433 traders, and an equal portion coming under the two headings of menial and professional. The people are mostly Vishnuvites, worshippers of gods and goddesses. The Nagas number 59,904, and the Kukis 17,204. It is a little startling that there are 5,000 musicians, which shews that the people are not at all very barbarous and were happy, and contented under their native rule.

The ancient history of the country dates from the days of the *Mahabharata*, when *Arjuna*, one of the five famous *Pandavas*, married a princess of the Manipur royal family. The son of this marriage was *Babrubana*, who inherited his maternal state. From him, the people, but more particularly the reigning dynasty, trace their descent, and they always pride themselves by saying that their ancestor was the great *Arjuna* himself. This marriage, between an Aryan and an aboriginal, proves beyond doubt that Hinduism has become more conservative in its later period than it had been in ancient times. The Manipuris are the mixed descendants of the Aryans and the non-Aryans, their general facial characteristics are Mongolian, but there is great diversity among them, some of them shewing a regularity approaching the Aryan type.

This beautiful little state was virtually independent of the Government of India. It has never paid a single cowrie as tribute to the Paramount.

Power. But being very close to, and in fact, surrounded by British India, it has always sought to win the good-will, and cultivate the friendship of the British. Its political status was far better than that of any other Native State in India. Hyderabad with its vast resources does not enjoy one-tenth of the independence which this country enjoyed until the entry of British soldiers in Imphal on the 27th April 1891. It was as independent as the State of Nepal or of Afghanistan.

Through all the successive waves of invasions, that had passed over Bengal and Assam, Manipur had remained untouched from the eastern side. History does not record any invasion of the country either by the Pathans or the Moghuls who ruled at Delhi as Paramount Power, after the overthrow of the Hindu dynasty of *Prithviraj*. This escape from conquest by the Muhamadans may partly be ascribed to the natural bulwark of hills and dense jungles by which the valley of Manipur is surrounded on all sides and the difficulty of the roads leading thereto. The people, moreover, never possessed any wealth to attract them. But they were always in dread of invasion by the Burmese, who on many occasions not only conquered the country, but often annexed it to their own dominion. Before the ratification of the treaty of Yandaboo the court of Ava regarded the country as a Vassal State.

From a very early period the people had lived

in a state of happy barbarity, not profiting much by the improvements which the other parts of India had made and the civilisation they had attained under their different masters. They paid their tribute in kind, and served their Maharaja every ten days out of every forty, which were chiefly utilised in Municipal works, such as repairing roads, bridges, &c. Such services are known as *lalloop*. Though it was a forced labor, they were so accustomed to it from a very ancient time that they never complained of it.

They had very recently appreciated the use of money. Their trade was still to a great measure managed by barter. The only coin peculiar to the country is bell-metal. The English and the Burmese coins are in use, but as the country is poor, the whole amount in circulation is not very large.

There are three kinds of courts of Justice in the country. The *Chirap*, the Military Court, and the *Paja*, the women's Court. In the *Chirap*, which was composed of thirteen senior members of the Durbar, all of whom were appointed by the Raja, were tried all the civil and the criminal cases. In the Military Court, which was composed of senior officers of the Army, were tried all offenders who belonged to the Army. The *Paja* was quite a peculiar court, composed of women, in which were tried all who offended women in any way. The liberty enjoyed by the softer sex in this and many other respects is very great. Indeed, they have

more freedom than what could be seen in other parts of India. The capital punishment of the State was decapitation, and a number of executioners—quite a large number—were often maintained for the purpose ; and for minor offences men were fined, imprisoned, whipped, or paraded before the people in the bazaar by the Kutwal or his men. The jail, which was inside the palace, had quarters for about 100 prisoners.

Species of village clubs, under the head of the village, adjudicate in minor cases ; and in the event of a villager falling into extreme poverty they supply him with food ; in sickness they look after him, and in the case of his death provide wood, &c., for his cremation. In this way, although many of the inhabitants are very poor, actual starvation or fatal neglect is impossible.

The Nagas and the head-hunting Kukis form part of the population of Manipur. They are very barbarous and are of the pure non-Aryan blood. The former are not at all favorably disposed to the Manipuris, for when the Government of India had from time to time sent expeditions to punish their raids into British territory they helped it with their sepoy. But such had not been the case with the latter who were very devoted followers of the Raja whom they looked upon as their God.

The relation between the Government of India, and the state of Manipur does not seem to be clearly defined by any treaty. In the year 1714,

Gharib Nawaz succeeded to power. He made several successive invasions into Burma, but no permanent conquest. After his death Manipur was invaded by the Burmese in 1762, and its ruler Jai Sing, having sought the aid of the British, a treaty of alliance was negotiated in the same year. The force sent to assist Manipur was, however, recalled, and after this, little communication passed between the British Government and the state for some years. At the close of the First Burmese War in 1826, it was stipulated by the second Article of the Treaty of Yandaboo, that the King of Ava should recognise the independence of Manipur. In the year 1833, an agreement was entered into between the British Government and Raja Gambhir Singh, by which two ranges of hills between the Eastern and Western Bends of the Barak were made over to Manipur, on certain conditions, one of which referred to freedom of trade between the two countries and another bound the Raja to assist the British Government with a portion of his troops in case of disturbances on the ~~North-Eastern~~ frontier. In 1834, an agreement was entered into by which the Kubo Valley was transferred from Manipur to Burma, the British Government making the Raja a yearly payment of £637 by way of compensation. On the death of Gambhir Sing, his infant son, Chandra Kirtee Sing, was placed on the Gadi by Nur Sing, who declared himself Regent. In 1844, however, in consequence

a failure of a plot against the Regent's life the *Ranee* fled with her infant son from the country, and Nur Sing occupied the Gadi till his death in 1850, when he was succeeded by his brother Debendra Singh. Three months afterwards Chundra Kirtee Singh, the Raja, who was deposed, and son of Gambhir Sing, established his own authority. He had rendered a loyal assistance to the Government of India in its Naga War of 1879, by sending a force under Colonel Sir James Johnstone to rescue the sorely beleaguered garrison at Kohima, for which he received the honour of Knighthood. The state had 5,000 infantry armed with Enfield and Snider rifles, 500 artillery and 400 cavalry.

It may be asked how notwithstanding a very paltry income of about 50,000 rupees per annum, the Raja managed to maintain such a large army. The men were not paid in money, but had assignments of lands for the free enjoyment of which they were bound to serve the Maharaja as sepoy on certain periods of a year or when called for. The chiefs and the headmen of the State were like the feudal barons of England at the time of the Conqueror and his descendants.

CHAPTER II.

THE SEPTEMBER REVOLT.

THE political atmosphere of Manipur had often been disturbed by revolts and assassinations amongst the members of the royal family. Such a disturbance happened on the night of the 22nd September 1890, when the Maharaja Suro Chundra Singh was attacked by his step-brothers Tekendrajit, Doloroi Hanjaba and Zillah Singh in his palace, which compelled him to take refuge in the Residency. The Maharaja could not act up to the satisfaction of the Political Agent, and consequently he was never favorably reported to the Government of India ; he being of a retired disposition and rather an ascetic than a monarch, and as such a very ludicrous figure to an Anglo-Indian, even though he might have been a man of sterling merit. While on the other hand, Mr. Grimwood entertained a very high opinion of the ability of Tekendrajit and above all he was on terms of friendship with him. The unfavorable opinion of the Political Agent on the ability of the Maharaja, buoyed up the conspirators in their attempts at rebellion against him, who was a ruler acknowledged by the Paramount Power. Residents and Political Agents should be very careful how they cultivate the friendship of any prince lest he should presume their good-will in his unconstitu-

tional actions. The Maharaja had always ruled his people with justice tempered with paternal kindness. His brothers, he had always treated with utmost sympathy giving them places of power and emolument. His uterine brother Pucca Sena, sometimes had a quarrel with Takendrajit, which, however, never threatened to be dangerous, because, whenever, it had ran a perilous length, the elders, who were at least outwardly friendly to each other intervened and settled the matter in dispute.

The night was far advanced and the Maharaja was fast asleep. The sudden peals of fire-arms awoke him, and he instantly knew what these meant. The folly of his leniency then became at once clear to him. To oppose the rebels at that hour was quite impossible, because the soldiers were away in the villages and were fast asleep. So successful was the surprise that the Maharaja had hardly tied his turban when the Senapati and his followers were inside the palace. Bullets whizzed all around, one of which, it is said, passed the turban of the Maharaja, but did not injure him. He then fled precipitately through a back-door to the Residency and interviewed Mr. Grimwood whom the tumults had just then awakened. Eventually he was joined by Pucca Sena, Tongal General, and the other ministers and the officers of the State. But nothing could be done in the dead of night. It was passed in silence. With the dawn of day the Residency was thronged

with the Maharaja's soldiers, with arms and without arms, all eager to fight with the rebels, and it is probable that with their help and the help of the Residency escort, the rebellion might have been put down only if there had been a man of sufficient strength and courage to marshal them for such a purpose. The Maharaja in his representation to the Government of India had submitted that he was quite willing to fight and wanted only the permission of the Political Agent, but the latter was quite opposed to it and disarmed his soldiers with the help of the Residency escort. But the report of the Political Agent is quite the reverse of it. The Maharaja, said he, was never willing to face his enemy and he wanted to become a devotee and to this purpose he unflinchingly adhered notwithstanding the repeated remonstrances of the Political Agent to the contrary. Without questioning the truth or otherwise of the two conflicting statements it can safely be said that the action of the Maharaja, by precipitately leaving the country, and that of the Political Agent for not concerting swift measures to defeat the end of the rebellion, were both unwarrantable. Mr. Grimwood ought to have reproved the rebel-brothers for their audacity in causing a rebellion, and informed them of the danger they had incurred, and the displeasure of the Government of India they must rouse when the news of the rebellion reach the Paramount Power. It is also quite inexplicable, why

Mr. Grimwood did not avail himself of the 200 rifles from the garrison at Kohima, who were telegraphed for by the Chief Commissioner to be ready to proceed at a moment's notice from the Agency, with a view to restore the Maharaja and punish the rebels. If he thought that they were not sufficient for the purposes why more troops were not asked for? It is only when the Maharaja felt the apathy of the Political Agent in his cause that he formed the resolution of leaving the country and going to Brindabun. Mr. Grimwood himself wrote to the Chief Commissioner:—"By the after-noon there were so many Manipuris in the Residency ground that I insisted on many of them leaving, *especially the ones with arms*, as during the night it would be impossible for our sepoy to distinguish to which party a Manipuri belonged, and, if one of the Manipuris fired off his musket, it would probably create much confusion in the darkness. I did this by the advice of Mr. Berkeley, who made the arrangements for defending the place in case of a night attack; *but it seemed to have hurt the Maharaja's feelings, and he said people would say I had made him a prisoner and then he first began to talk of giving up his gadi and retiring to Brindabun as a devotee.*"

The revolt of the brothers was a direct insult to the British flag; and, therefore, the best course that was open to the Government of India was not to acknowledge the Jubararj, who was un-

questionably a passive, though not an active accomplice in the conspiracy. All the insurgents ought to have been eliminated from the state, and if in the opinion of the Government, the *dejure* Maharaja was weak and incapable of governing properly, his son ought to have been raised to the gadi. If Kulo Chundra had no hand in the plot when the palace was attacked, his hasty assumption of the title of Maharaja without previously taking the opinion of the Government of India had conclusively implicated him in the plot. He might allege that he had been ignorant of the existence of the conspiracy, which even one can hardly believe, but his later actions have belied his allegation.

The Political Agent consented to escort the Maharaja to British India. But he wrote to his brothers that he was going to Brindabun, and wanted them to make all the necessary arrangements for his pilgrimage. In Manipur any one bent on visiting Brindabun is not only protected from being killed or mal-treated, but even his bitter enemy is religiously bound to offer him every help for the fulfilment of his holy desire. The Maharaja's intention to visit Brindabun has eventually proved to be a feint to ensure his safe departure from the country. The Jubaraj gave him 1,000 rupees as his passage money. Thus shielded from all personal violence he passed safely through Lakhipur and then arrived at Silchar, expecting to meet the Chief Commissioner whom he heard stay,

ing there, but unfortunately for him he had just then left the station when he arrived.

Baffled in his attempt to meet the Chief Commissioner, he at once resolved to come down to Calcutta. His astonishment was very great when he learned that the pass granted him by the Political Agent contained a report to the Government, that he had voluntarily abdicated his gadi in favor of the Jubaraj, and therefore on the 6th October he telegraphed to the Chief Commissioner and the Political Agent, that he was mis-understood, because he had never meant to relinquish his gadi once for all. Indeed, what he wrote to the rebel brothers was simply a desire to go *once* to Brindabun and required them to make the necessary arrangements, and if only from that communication the Political Agent had concluded that he had voluntarily resigned his gadi, which none, but a Lear would only do unless compelled by extraneous circumstances, then surely the poor prince was grievously mis-understood. What the Maharaja then wrote to his brothers is as follows:—"I have much to inform my younger brother, the Senapati, I have no hope of fighting against you, and I have already told you before that I intended to go *once* to Brindabun. Therefore, my brother, be kind and arrange for your elder brother's. (*i. e.* my) journey to Brindabun."

CHAPTER III.

THE POLITICAL ASPECTS.

During the time the Maharaja had been in the Residency he neither touched nor tasted any food, because it is profane for a Hindu to do so in the house of a Christian. But for all his asceticisms he appeared to be not at all indifferent to his duties as Maharaja, for had he really been unmindful of the welfare and the just government of his people, then they would not have so dotingly clung to him to the last moment of his stay in the country, and wept so bitterly when they came to know that he was leaving them. The Indians are always submissive to the power that be, whether it be humane or otherwise. That they had made no demonstration against Kulo Chundra and Tekendrajit, who enjoyed undisturbed possession of their power since the 22nd September 1890, was only because the Maharaja left the country so precipitately.

The permission of the Government of India to acknowledge the usurper Kulo Chundra was a questionable policy, setting a very bad example to the similar aspirants in the other native states. It might have been justified in driving Tekendrajit only along with the other rebels in the interest of the Maharaja, but it rendered itself open to

unpalatable criticism by going to acknowledge the one as Maharaja and to banish the other. Both were guilty of the same charge of conspiracy and rebellion against an established Government, and I do not see any reason why one should be rewarded and the other punished. Banishment would have been a light punishment for the crime they had committed. For the offence of a similar nature many princes in the various states in India were often condemned to death. Moreover, if we refer to the history of England what do we find there? Was not Monmouth for his rebellion against James II., his uncle, beheaded? Is it possible that a century or two will so far change the laws of dealing with political offenders charged with conspiracy and rebellion as to render it lawful to acknowledge them in their *defacto* position. Verily it seems to be so, for otherwise, how could the Government of India think itself justified in acknowledging a base rebel and usurper in the place of a ruler whom it had once solemnly acknowledged. I can not exonerate the Regent from his share in the September Revolt. He was surely cognizant of all that his younger brothers were doing and they were secretly under his instructions, if such he had wits enough to impart. ✓ He had only stayed out at the time of the attack on the palace simply to see how matters might take their turn, and when he saw that every thing succeeded pretty well he came in

quietly and declared himself Maharaja, neither with any hesitation nor a show of compunction.

With a view to settle the affairs of Manipur Mr. Quinton had paid a flying visit to Calcutta during the cold weather, when the policy, that subsequently bore such melancholy fruits, was chalked out. The Government of India was at first inclined to restore the Maharaja, but its policy was completely altered by the opinion of Mr. Quinton, formed on the strength of the report of Mr. Grimwood, that the Maharaja could not be maintained on the gadi, unless the Government always undertook to interfere in his behalf with a sufficient show of strength.

Accordingly a formal letter was sent from the Foreign Department to the Chief Commissioner on the 21st February 1891, in which the Government of India acknowledged the Regent Kulo Chundra as Maharaja, but on condition that he must permit his brother Tekendrajit to be deported out of the country. In none of its communications to the Chief Commissioner did the Government of India suggest, that Tekendrajit should be made prisoner in Durbar, and from thence to be peremptorily deported out of the country. The responsibility for this piece of blunder, which the Press in India and England has with one voice disapproved, rests with Mr. Quinton, who telegraphed his plan for approval only on the 21st March, when the Government of India could hardly have time sufficient to deliberate

whether arrest in Durbar would be a somewhat questionable measure. And it had therefore unwittingly committed itself by not at once countermanding his proposal when he telegraphed it for approval. The *Times*, the Chief of the Conservative organs, disapproved the policy of the Government when first the news of the disaster reached England, and its opinion hardly altered when the India Office published the Blue Book containing all the correspondence of the imbroglio. It then wrote in its subdued tone:—"That while Mr. Quinton's under-estimate of the gravity of the situation at Manipur and his consequent inadequate provision of force are chargeable to him alone, the responsibility for the plan of summoning the Senapati to the Durbar and arresting him without previous notice, must be shared by the Government of India which approved his proposals." On a review of all the facts the leading journal was glad to be able to acquit the Government and the British officials of anything that can be branded as a deliberate design of treachery. But Mr. Quinton's plan, which the Viceroy defended, as the most straight-forward and the safest was in its opinion neither the one nor the other. It was foredoomed to failure, and in fact it failed; but, moreover, it said, it was wanting in that frankness and boldness which constitute the moral strength of the Englishmen's position in India, and which alone are worthy of their Imperial responsibilities. The

Standard also thus wrote on the subject:—"In India not less than in England, the scheme for arresting the Senapati at the Durbar has made an unpleasant impression upon the public mind. It must be admitted that Mr. Quinton's plan did not present itself to the Government of India in the light of an unfair stratagem, and Mr. Quinton himself was doubtless imbued with the idea that, the Senapati being merely a disorderly person, subject to British law his arrest was to be judged from an ordinary civil stand point, and not at all as an act of war. Nevertheless, the transaction has an unpleasant flavour. Even from a technical point of view the Senapati did not stand exactly in the same position as a British subject, and unfortunately he proved his *defacto* possession of the status of a belligerent in a way which undoubtedly makes the technical view doubly difficult to defend. If he was merely an offender against municipal law the necessity for a Durbar is not apparent. Surely the proper course on that theory was simply to issue a summons for his surrender, as was in fact done when he refused to attend Durbar. To ask him to that function was in fact to admit a status, which ought to have precluded the design of seizure ; but in a business so wofully mismanaged throughout it is useless to look for logical thinking upon any point. There exists through out the country a very wide spread feeling, that the expedient suggested by Mr. Quinton and sanctioned by the Viceroy for obtaining possession

of the person of the Senapati was not in accordance with the best traditions of the Indian Government in dealing with Feudatory Princes, and was wanting in that unmistakeable and unquestionable straight-forwardness, that ought to characterise our dealings with our subjects of whatever rank in the East." The *Daily News* said, that the contents of the Blue Book established in the most decisive way the responsibility of the Government of India. The *Pioneer* of Allhabad wrote on the 24th May regarding the opinion of the English Press:—"Take what view of the rights of the case we may, it is a palpable fact that not since the year 1880 when Lord Lytton's Government was detected in the colossal error of its finances has the Government of India fallen under general discredit in England among all parties as it stands under at the present moment. The mails already to hand shew that there is nothing to choose between Tory and Radical organs in the bitterness of the judgment that are passed upon the conduct of the Manipur affair." Mr. Quinton ought to have informed the Regent and the Senapati before he started what he intended to do on his arrival at Imphal. In that case Mr. Grimwood might have appraised the full length of the opposition, and a stronger force could have then been taken to enforce the orders of Government. Tekendrajit was all powerful in the little State, and master of the master of Manipur, and it had therefore been wrong to expect that the head of 5,000

infantry, with a park of artillery, and a good number of cavalry, will submit meekly to be carried away, perhaps for ever, torn from all that is dear in this world, rank, power, association, and enjoyments; when he plainly saw that the strength of his captors was not sufficient for their purpose. The august name of the Paramount Power works of course like a spell in native states, but how could it have any effect on a man, grown desperate at the peremptory orders of the Government, and whose antecedents were crowded with murder, treachery and rebellion. He knew that the days of his good fortune were numbered, and therefore he made no hesitation to oppose armed force with armed force, and suffered the heads of the English officers to be cut off when they unwittingly permitted themselves to be entrapped in his snares. As a very wicked man he never minded for a moment, what consequences would hereafter entail on the state for his rash and cruel actions. His patriotism was in harmony with the prospect of his own aggrandisement and elevation.

The Government of India did not approve his conduct in the late revolt. He had made himself the real head of the Manipur Durbar and could make or unmake a king at his will. To keep such a man in the full enjoyment of his power, was in its opinion to foster disturbing elements in a neighbouring state. Moreover, being the Paramount Power, it could not brook the idea, that any.

one in India should make or unmake kings without its sanction. This might be a plausible argument for removing the Jubaraj ; but it had exposed itself to harsh criticism in this country and in England for having acquiesced in his capture in Durbar without furnishing him with any previous intimation. But the proper course that was open to Government in this Manipur affair was to have adopted measures for the restoration of the Maharaja who went a-begging to its doors for help. It may be argued that in absence of any existing treaty with the state, guaranteeing the possession of the gadi to Sura Chundra and his heirs, the Government was justified in acknowledging the *defacto* ruler. But, then, if it was really justified in acknowledging a usurper, I do not see any reason why the tool by which he ascended the gadi should have been deemed necessary for removal. The clear duty of the Government was to instal the Maharaja even by force of arms or to have remained neutral, for had Teken-drajit been allowed to remain at Manipur the prestige and the interest of the Paramount Power would not in the least have been impaired. But the Government of India had once felt itself justified in expending Indian money to restore Shah Shuja. Would it not have been doubly justifiable had it furnished the Maharaja with a small force to regain his gadi and to punish all the conspirators.

Sura Chundra and his ancestors far from doing

anything to incur the displeasure of the English, had often helped them as much as was compatible with their slender resources in their wars with the Nagas, the Chins and the Lushais. As often as an expedition was undertaken in the eastern border, this small State had rendered services which were not only often recognised by the Government but were on several occasions, rewarded by the bestowal of fire-arms and other useful articles. The Imperial Government bestowed the honour of Knighthood on the late Maharaja Chundrakirti Singh for his promptly sending a detachment of Manipuri soldiers to raise the siege of Kohima, which had been laid by the Nagas in 1879. Neither the ethics of friendship nor the past services of a prince to a prince rule the sphere of politics, for had these any binding force on them the petition of Sura Chundra would not have received that slight consideration that it did.

Of all the contributions that have since appeared in the Press from the pen of the retired Anglo-Indians, none has commanded so much attention as that of Colonel Johnstone, who was once the Political Agent at Manipur. What would have been the clear and correct policy in his opinion was to have taken the ex-Maharaja with the expedition, and to have entered the country through the old Cachar-Manipur route, for in that case, wrote the Colonel, the sympathy of the people would have been to a considerable extent on the side of Mr.

Quinton, and many of them would have flocked to the standard of their old Raja, as he would move from stage to stage.

In the absence of any definite treaty with the state only one of two courses was open to the Paramount Power. Either it should have remained unconcerned to what happened, or it ought to have helped the Maharaja, who had come to them with the full hope of getting help. To turn a deaf ear to the prayers of a weeping and suppliant prince, and then to acknowledge with all honours his usurper is a very questionable measure indeed.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EXPEDITION OF MR. QUINTON.

The escort, which accompanied the Chief Commissioner, consisted of only 400 rifles under Colonel Skene, drawn from the 42nd and the 43rd Goorkhas, then stationed at Assam, which have proved to be too inconsiderable for the purposes they were carried. The *Times* thus condemned its strength:—
“The whole expedition was planned in over-winning confidence by a man who did not choose to ask or listen to advice and who took every precaution to conceal his intentions. Four hundred men with only forty rounds of ammunition were led into a town defended by 12 thousand rifles and 10 guns to back up a cool request to the master of these

forces, that he would quietly surrender himself to exile." Mr. Quinton knew that the person whom he intended to arrest was not an insignificant man in Manipur. He was no other than the real head of a band of soldiers, numbering about 5,000 men armed with Snider and Enfield rifles. He should, therefore, have taken as many more troops as he actually took and a few field-pieces too. Having such a force under him any armed resistance which the Senapati could have offered might have been effectually quelled without any very serious loss or danger to him. The Government of India should have profited by the lessons of its own history. Had it remembered how Mr. Cherry lost his life in going to capture Vazir Ali of Oudh, and into what difficulty Warren Hastings threw himself at Benares in the midst of the enraged people of Cheit Singh for his not having taken a sufficient escort, and how he made a hair-breadth escape with his life, then it would not have approved Mr. Quinton's proposal to capture the head of an army of 5,000 soldiers with an effective park of artillery, however undisciplined they might have been, with a detachment of 500 men only, without cannon, without cavalry, who, even taking into consideration their superior discipline, were not a match for an organised resistance of the combined forces of Manipur, even far less as a party for their surprise. The escort should have been a stronger one for another reason. There were no proper roads nor railways leading

into the country, and under such circumstances reinforcement from the nearest British station could not have reached Imphal within a week in the least on the occurrence of an outbreak.

Before Mr. Quinton reached Manipur he had sent Lieutenant Gurdon to the Residency to ascertain from Mr. Grimwood the probable amount of opposition that he might expect in his attempt to arrest the Jubaraj. According to Mr. Grimwood the Jubaraj would personally resist any attempt to seize him, and he could not suggest any means by which he could be secured without giving him an opportunity to resist. Lieutenant Gurdon did not then communicate to him the particular plan of capturing him in Durbar. Of this he was informed as late as when he went to welcome the Chief Commissioner at a place few miles from Imphal.

The escort was too large to rouse suspicion, but too small to adequately meet all attempts at opposition. Even when the Jubaraj learned that the Maharaja was not with the expedition he had sufficient reasons to doubt, from the strength of the escort, the aim and the object of the expedition, moreover when he had such a message from Calcutta that "a large tiger is shortly to be bagged in Manipur." The Jubaraj marched at the head of 2,000 sepoy to Sengmai to welcome Mr. Quinton, and had any attempt been made to capture him on the occasion of this semi-friendly reception, perhaps, a severe engagement would have been the result,

and the Manipuris would have been found not the less prepared for the occasion. The Chief Commissioner arrived at Imphal on Sunday, where he was welcomed by the Regent himself ; the 7-pounder Mountain-Guns firing the salute from the polo ground. Mr. Quinton at once informed him that he would hold a Durbar at noon on that day, and asked him to attend with all his brothers and the superior officers of the State, when he would communicate to him a message from the Government of India and formally acknowledge him as Maharaja. The Regent said that as it was Sunday and a day for their fasting it would be better if the Durbar were held next day. But Mr. Quinton insisted on holding it on that day. At the appointed hour the Regent with all his brothers presented themselves at the Residency Gate, but they were kept waiting at the threshold, because a particular document was not then ready. The lynx-eyed Senapati noticed unusual military dispositions around the main building of the Residency, every nook and corner was guarded by the sepoys. He at once decamped and did not return. When after all the Regent was allowed to enter the Residency he was not ushered into the Chief Commissioner's presence, the objection was that Tekendrajit should come in before he could be allowed to enter the Durbar Hall. The Regent then sent a man requesting him to come to the Residency. But he pretended to be ill and declined to come. The Dur-

Mr consequently fell through. It was fixed for the next day. Again the same plea and the same discomfiture. It was again directed to be held at noon, but even then Tekendrajit was conspicuous by his absence. When at the third time he declined to come, it became then apparent to Mr. Quinton that he did not at all mean to attend. Mr. Grimwood was then sent to the Regent's palace with the distinct message that his acknowledgment as Maharaja depended on his allowing the Senapati to be deported out of the country. The Senapati himself was interviewed but he would not listen to the counsel of Mr. Grimwood; he believed himself innocent and would not therefore go to exile.

On the return of Mr. Grimwood, unsuccessful in his negotiation, an attack was determined to be made on his palace. The adoption of hostile measures ought to have been delayed till Captain Cowley, who with 200 rifles was rapidly advancing towards Imphal, had arrived. The attack on the Senapati's palace was a palpable error. ✓ It was the last place where he could be found. Before the sepoy could get in, he left it and went to the Regent's palace. At the time of the commencement of hostility it should have been ascertained where the Prince really was, and then one grand dash ought to have been made against that place with the whole available force instead of with a part of it as had actually been done.

CHAPTER V.

THE ATTACK ON THE SENAPATI'S PALACE.

At night pickets were placed around the Residency. Lieutenant Brackenbury (nephew of the present Military Member of the Viceroy's Council) with 30 men, and Captain Butcher with 70 men were under orders to march out before dawn to surround the Senapati's palace. Lieutenant Lugard with 50 more men to support the movement. The Senapati knew from Mr. Grimwood's departure without success that force should be employed to arrest him, and he surely did not pass the night like *Shiraj* on the eve of the battle of Plassey in drunken revelry, but was engaged in collecting all the available forces under his immediate control.

Early next morning Lieutenant Brackenbury and Captain Butcher marched to the Senapati's palace, and when the former was bravely leading his handful of sepoys against thousands of men securely posted behind walls and dense jungle, he fell mortally wounded by bullet shots. The brave Goorkhas, little dismayed at the loss of their officer doggedly held possession of the ground although they were sorely exposed to the enemy's fire. Lieutenant Chatterton, son of Colonel

Chatterton of the Calcutta Volunteers, marched out at 8 A.M. with 30 men to attack the Raja's gateway from which the enemy were firing on the Residency, and killed two and triumphantly carried 17 prisoners. At 10 A. M. Colonel Skene himself with 80 men joined the parties of Captain Butcher who were occupying the Senapati's palace compound. At 12 o'clock the Residency was attacked from a cover of a village to the west and Captain Boileau went and set fire to it.

About one o'clock Colonel Skene returned from the Senapati's palace. At 4 P. M. all the Goorkhas were withdrawn within the Residency compound to man the walls. All the wounded were brought in. The enemy, then, in their turn, moved up and manned the loopholed walls of the palace, sixty yards distant from the Residency, and separated by one unfordable moat. Lieutenant Brackenbury would perhaps have remained at the very place where he lay riddled in bullets had not sepoy Joymani Thappa, B. Company, 42nd Goorkhas, rushed forward and carried him to a place of safety whence he was brought to the Residency.

At half past 7 there was a truce. Mr. Grimwood now suggested abandoning the Residency and retiring to certain heights about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles back, arguing that the fact of the telegraph line having been cut would have given warnings to their friends of a disaster; that they could hold the heights in the open, and out of the reach of the guns in their

present position, until reinforcements arrived, and that in the event of the guns being brought out, they could easily be rushed upon and captured. Colonel Skene at first fell in with this idea, but afterwards advised a retirement out of the country without delay. The Chief Commissioner thought otherwise. He considered that the best course would be to try and obtain terms, and this opinion prevailing, Mr. Grimwood was sent to parley. The Jubaraj declined to negotiate with any other except the Commissioner in person, apparently to retaliate on his demand not to open the Durbar unless he came. The demand of the Chief's presence as a condition preliminary to any negotiation would have been of itself sufficient to arouse the suspicion of all. At 8-30 p. m. the Chief Commissioner, Colonel Skene, Mr. Grimwood, Mr. Cossins and Lieutenant Simpson went forth to sue for terms at the hands of their victorious foe, and they precipitated themselves to their doom. Mr. Grimwood, had his wits sufficiently been alive to counsel a course of action, which if only it had been adopted would in all probability have averted disaster. A strong and veteran commander like Edwardes of Mooltan or Clive of Arcot could have averted all those hideous calamities that would for ever form a lamentable chapter of the British Indian History. A decisive and vigorous action by the whole force at Imphal might not only have prevented all disasters, but could have turned a complete discomfiture into a glorious victory. If

Arcot could be defended against 10,000 fanatics by only a handful of Madras sepoy, and the field of Plassey won by the same sepoy, and only a sprinkling of European soldiers surely it does not speak well of the officers who were in command at Imphal for their total failure in making a proper stand against the rabble soldiery of Manipur. Mr. Quinton must have acted with great indiscretion by not agreeing to the proposal of Mr. Grimwood, when he saw that his military colleague was for instantly beating a retreat. To expect any terms short of the most galling humiliation from the Senapati was out of question under the circumstances they were thrown into. He, whom they had come to send into exile, was by the mysterious decree of Providence, master of the situation, so much so that they had themselves thought him capable of dictating terms to them. Had not their mission been to deprive him of all that man considers dear in this world? His home, his country, his power and his position were all required to be sacrificed, even though for a time only. Providence reversed their relative situations and he got the dispensers of his fate under his control. Mr. Quinton had surely lost his head in the sudden unlooked for reverses that overtook him, for otherwise, he would not have thrown himself and his associates at the cruel mercy of a cruel and barbarous prince.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MASSACRE.

DULCE ET DECORUM EST PRO PATRIA MORI.

Of the unfortunate companions of Mr. Quinton the first to suffer was Mr. Grimwood. When they left the Durbar Hall, after the confused and false parley, in which perhaps angry words were used, they saw a large concourse of men in a threatening attitude standing before them. Believing that it would be perilous to press their way through them, they endeavoured to retreat to the Durbar Hall. But before they could get in, Mr. Grimwood fell pierced by a spear on the steps and Lieutenant Simpson was severely wounded. The former never rose from the place where he fell mortally wounded ; but the latter's wound, though not fatal, was nevertheless very severe. A friendly Manipuri dressed it with his *pugree*, before he was able to join his comrades, and was with them till he was taken away to be executed. He could hardly walk up to the dragons, beneath which they were executed, and had to lean on the shoulder of one of the guards ; and him they handed over first to the executioner, thus relieving him of his intense pains.

Major Maxwell from certain stories he heard from natives always doubted that Mr. Quinton and

his party were killed by an infuriated mob, and he at once endeavoured to find out who was the executioner, and had been after this very man for sometime. When captured the executioner at once confessed to the whole story. The name of this man is Sajol Senba. His depositions ran as follows and they appear to be correct—"I am a public executioner. On 24th March 1891, there was fighting between the British and the Manipuri troops, and I was in the guard not far from the west gate. In the evening I finished my dinner and was sitting down and listening to the firing, when Yen came up and called to the Sutwal that I was wanted with the executioners. The Sutwal ordered me to accompany him and I obliged, taking with me a dhao. We arrived at the Durbar House and some one called out 'one executioner is not enough' where upon the Sutwal went in search of more men. The four sahibs and a native sepoy came out of the house and the sentries marched them to the gate and made them over to me. The whole place was crowded with Manipuri sepoy. The sahibs were killed one by one. Chains were on their legs and their hands were tied behind their backs. Each one was placed in a standing position facing the west, and I was on the north side and gave the dhao stroke. The execution occurred at night, but it was bright moon-light, as bright as day." When the Sutwal returned after half an hour's search, without finding any other executioner he

saw the sahibs were killed ; Sajol Senba was standing by the bodies which were headless.

The horror of Mr. Quinton and his remaining companions when they witnessed before them the fate of Mr. Grimwood can best be imagined than described. Then had it been evident to them the dire mistake they had committed by trusting in the *bonnefoi* of a man whose antecedents were darkened by murder, villainy, rebellion, and treachery. To them then a minute was a year's terrible suspense, because they expected during that short period to be similarly done to death. Neither did their expectation last long. They were hurried up into the Durbar Hall by one of the ministers of the state where their fate was soon sealed. The Tongal General, an octogenarian, was the first who suggested that the sahibs should be killed, but there is no doubt, that his suggestion had eventually received the sanction of the Jubaraj. It might be that the idea of murdering the officers did not originate with him, but every one will admit that he did not take any measure to prevent their being murdered when he was informed of the Tongal's intention, and this amounts to his approval, because he had power to save them. The hands and feet of the officers were chained, and then they were precipitated down to the front of the two masonry dragons, and to the perpetual infamy of those who were in authority at Manipur on that dreadful night, the unfortunate Englishmen were brutally decapitated by

the State executioner, one saw the other's head fall till all were killed in this manner. Terrible sight more for them than for others.

The short interval that elapsed since the fall of Mr. Grimwood to the time they were executed was of utmost suffering to Mr. Quinton and his confreres. Consider for a moment how intense must be our pains and how nervous should we feel, at least, for some time, if, all of a sudden, we find ourselves face to face with grim death ; if, ever we fall into the hands of savage and blood-thirsty men all with drawn swords and levelled spears ready to fall on us, perhaps quarrelling with each other to claim the honour of killing us and discussing before our very eyes as to the way we should be killed, whether to be shot, beheaded or hacked joint by joint, some one pulling us to one side and the others to another disturbing us in the midst of our final prayers and resignation to the will of the Almighty Providence !

Very similar had been the position in which Mr. Quinton and his companions were thrown into on that fatal night of the 24th of March. But for all that could be said in favor of the Jubaraj the final responsibility of the murder rests on him. He countenanced the acts of the rabble soldiery, excited them to ferocity and finally upheld the orders for massacre. None could have killed them, not even the blood-thirsty Tongal, far less to have annoyed them, if the orders for their execution had not received the sanction of the Jubaraj. They were

deliberately decapitated by his orders and not killed in a moment of frenzy by the infuriated people. The crime of the murderers was of too inhuman a nature and they therefore had left no chance of being leniently treated. Had they committed such a crime on some of the Muhammedan officers in the time of their supremacy, I doubt not, but that the avenging army would have put to death all who might have fallen before them in their victorious march through the country. A few soldiers of Nadir Shah being attacked by the inhabitants of Delhi, the heads of 1,00,000 men could not atone for the crime alone. The whole city was indiscriminately butchered from the early morning till sunset, when Nadir sheathed his sword, which had been the signal to cease carnage. It is only because the English are civilised, judicious and tolerant, that they had granted a trial to the murderers of their officers. The plan of Mr. Quinton to capture the Jubaraj in an open Durbar was surely opposed to polite mode of international treatment, but, nevertheless, the Manipuris had acted very treacherously in killing Mr. Quinton and his companions who went to parley under a flag of truce and were thus sanguine of their personal safety. The Chief and his companions were like handicapped culprits in the hands of a Morocco executioner or a Chinese butcher. Their minds at the time they were shackled by the blacksmith till they were relieved of all their agonies by the fatal strokes of the execu-

tioner were like so many oceans in storm. Conflicting and confusing thoughts came crowding in their minds appearing and disappearing in a minute like stray visions in a dream. The familiar home scenes, the phantoms of affectionate wife and darling children all came and pressed for one parting recollection. But Ah ! where were they whom they longed so much to see once more on this side the grave, and, perhaps thought, they saw in their mind's mirror and bade them farewell in their imaginary interview. The wives knew not the fate of their husbands, the children of their fathers, and the country of her devoted sons. Even when bathed in repose and fast locked in the cool and salubrious arms of sleep they were perchance disturbed by ghastly nightmares as stroke after stroke made the wives widows and the children orphans. What was the state of their mind in the morning ? Higher and higher flew their hope and aspiration on the horizon of Manipur. They had only before them a perspective of a verdant field, but lo ! mysterious are the dispensations of Providence. The verdant field of the morning full of promising fruits for the future, became a desert ere the sun went down, and the field of their future fame and prospect proved only to be their sepulchre.

Had Mr. Quinton and his companions fallen sword in hand as fell brave Brackenbury, it would have been a great consolation for all, and the charge of murder could not have been brought

home to the Jubaraj and the Tongal. Their crime, then, if crime it could be called, would have amounted to repelling armed attack by armed repulse and they might have been thereby entitled to some sympathy for brave resistance to an ungraceful demand in a graceful place. They proved to be victorious indeed. Even the brave Goorkhas retreated before them. But they abused their victory when they put to death the English officers who unwarily fell into their trap. Even had they only detained them as prisoners they would have been entitled to some consideration.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RETREAT.

In a second article published after the receipt of the Viceroy's supplementary telegrams, the *Times* said—"that the Military conduct of the affair was as inexplicable as the political. How, when a retreat might have been effected in tolerable order, the senior officers came to hand themselves over to the enemy is a mystery which may never be elucidated. Mr. Grimwood is said to have advised a parley at the gate, but the rush into the arms of the enemy is very unlikely to have been counselled by the only man who had any faculty for measuring danger."

While Mr. Grimwood and the rest of the officers were anxiously awaiting for the return of the party, one of the Manipuris cried out that Mr. Quinton and his companions would not return. This proved to be the signal to open fire, and the attack on the Residency was renewed with greater vigour. A deadly fire of musketry was not only kept up from places where the enemy were securely lodged, but four seven-pounders muzzle-loading guns, being now placed in position, threw out shot and shells which told severely on the fragile buildings of the Residency. Then to all present it became clear that under the pretence of effecting an armistice, Mr. Quinton and his companions were made prisoners. Whether they should not have made one dashing charge on the Rajah's palace at the point of their bayonets to save them remains to be decided by military experts. They were only convinced as to the impossibility of defending the buildings any further, because the enemy had begun to hem in on all sides in greater number. Finding them busily engaged in rifling the Treasury in the Residency, which was close to the principal gateway facing the road to the palace, Captains Boileau, and Butcher, Lieutenants Lugard and Woods, Dr. Calvert and Mrs. Grimwood with about 200 Goorkha sepoy retreated from behind the Residency, through the road leading to Cachar. The retreat was made without any very great loss, because the enemy were then all engaged in the Treasury where

each one was trying to get a larger share of the spoil than his comrade, none was then in a mood to chase the fugitives till they had marched a great way off from them. During their retreat they passed by their right and left many Naga villages, but at Mrs. Grimwood's suggestion they always avoided them as best as they could. Keeping themselves also aloof from the principal road, but always parallel to it, the small band of heroes moved forward through bushy jungles and over precipitous hills.

During the time the Residency was shelled, Mrs. Grimwood, the only Lady in the Residency, acted with praiseworthy courage and coolness, for which the Press in India and England has conferred on her the appellation of "Heroine of Manipur." She moved from place to place, calm and collected, as if nothing had happened. At times she was engaged in preparing sandwiches for the officers, and on another occasion running to dress the wounds of a poor Goorkha, or standing by the side of dying Brackenbury to alleviate his intense suffering and to minister to his wants as best as she could, and this too without having ever sat to dinner or taking any rest. The hem of her garment was tinged red with the blood of the wounded. Bullets were flying on all sides, and soldiers reeling before her very eyes in the cold arms of death. During such an hour of awful peril and trial, perhaps already anticipating the

worst fate of her unreturned husband, did the heroic lady help all who required help.

The night was far advanced when the retreat commenced. The dead, were only forsaken to the cruel mercy of the enemy. There was hardly any time or an opportunity to bury them. Order and discipline prevailed amongst them. But they had apparently slackened when provisions began to fail; grim hunger forced many to separate themselves from the mainbody, only to be easy prey to the head-hunting Kukis or the merciless Manipuris.

Mrs. Grimwood, dressed as a Goorkha, wore a large *pagree* on her head, and the officers had always placed her in as much safety as they could. Had she remained in her feminine dress, perhaps, she would not have reached British India alive. The enemy would then have surely made her the object of their especial mark and shot her. At one occasion when they approached very near to the retreating party Captain Butcher asked her to lie down and then hastily taking a rifle from a Goorkha shot five of the advancing Manipuris when they fled faster than they came.

The want of provision had the effect of thinning their ranks. They had a perilous march before them, at every stage of which, they expected to be surrounded by the whole force of the enemy and killed. Had they not exerted themselves to their utmost, perhaps, they would not have met Captain Cowley

who was quite unaware of what happened, and both the advance and the retreat would have been equally disastrous. Hard as had been the lot of the poor men, they bore their misfortunes with cheerfulness, with hardly any thing to eat except grass and bamboo shoots, and having only muddy waters to quench their intense thirst. Mr. Woods whose characteristic witticism, even when before the very jaws of death, never forsook him, often amused the party by saying that he was going to fetch them a glass of whiskey when he could hardly bring a glass of muddy water. Their sufferings had no parallel in the annals of the Indian history, except that were undergone by the still unlucky soldiers and camp-followers, who in the years 1841 retreated from Cabul in the direction of Jellalabad, and of whom hardly a couple of men reached their destination to tell the tale of disaster that had overtaken an English Brigade.

Mrs. Grimwood, far from being a burthen^d to Captain Boileau and an impediment to his movement, was really a great help to him. Most courageous and hopeful of the party she never faltered even when the officers and their men shewed symptoms of despair. The gallant young lady deserves to be numbered with the heroines of India. The world could not have learnt any thing of what metal nature had made her, had not her patience, indomitable perseverance and her utter indifference to pains and danger, been mirrored before the world in bold

relief by the sad reverses to British Power from an insignificant and quite unexpected quarter. She lead them over hills and dales and through unknown woody paths, that only prevented them from falling into the hands of the enemy, and ultimately brought them before the advancing guards of Captain Cowley. Had he marched up to Imphal, perhaps, he would have either suffered a crushing defeat or gained as glorious a victory as that of Grant. When the guards were descried it was at first not ascertainable whether they were friends or foes. The gallant Captain Butcher at this moment of awful suspense and peril, seeing that every thing was lost, with a heavy heart, but with all the calmness of a soldier, advancing to Mrs. Grimwood, said to her, that the rifle that he had in his hand contained two shots, in the event the advancing party turn out to be the enemy he would end her life by the one and shatter his own brain by the other. He was only forced to make this extreme resolution because he was sanguine that the half famished and utterly exhausted soldiers that were under him will not be able to make a stand against the enemy, and instead of becoming prisoners in their hands, thus incurring the danger of meeting a tortured death, he preferred putting an end to their life by his own hands. Mrs. Grimwood instead of staggering at the Captain's dreadful resolution, asked him with all the innocence of a child "Will it strike Captain Butcher?" Her simple

query must have imparted an electric shock into his heart, and who can say tears did not then drop from his eyes.

However, they were not long in suspense, the party proved to be the one they were seeking to meet. Who can describe their joy when they met them. Being sanguine of safety they hastily retreated towards Cachar.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DEFENCE OF THOBAL.

“ O ! thou who to a feebler time
 Hast brought remembrance of the days
 When Napier arm'd his wrath sublime,
 And Havelock donn'd his deathless bays,
 Adown the ages ever more
 A trumpet call from sea to sea
 Shall sound thy slogan, fear'd of yore,
*Stand fast, stand fast, Craigellachie.**

The flag of England droop'd forlorn
 When England's sons were foully slain
 But by thy stout right arm up-borne,
 It flutters on the breeze again !
 Thy courage nerv'd thy little band,
 And sixty with six thousand spoke
 When on thy scanty rampart's strand
 The swarthy foemen swarmed and broke !

* The ancient war-cry of clan Grant was *stand fast, stand fast Craigellachie.*

We sit at home in slothful ease
What time the wrangling parties prate ;
Haunt Mammon's shrine, grow fat on fees,
Or drug ourselves with dull debates :
But thou wert swift to do and dare
Meet boast with boast, and wile with wile
Unresting, gallant debonnair
Disarming danger with a smile.

Brave warrior boy, old Englagd's heart,
Thrills wildly at thy moving tale ;
While such survive to take her part,
Her glories shall not fade nor fall :
Upon her roll of heroes found
Thy name in gold shall blazon'd be
Thy slogan through the world shall sound
Stand fast, Stand fast, Craigellachie."

(H. F. WILSON.)

It was on the 27th of March that Lieutenant Grant received orders from General Stewart, to move at once upon Manipur, the idea being that Mr. Quinton and other officers were still alive and that it might be possible to rescue them. Even if the full extent of the catastrophe might not have been then known such a small force as only 80 rifles should not have been sent out from an isolated post without supports of any kind.

Jemadar Birbal Nagarkoti of the 43rd Goorkhas with 34 men had arrived at Tammu from Laugthobal, having fought his way majestically through the Manipuri thanas, burning such as fired upon him. Lieutenant Grant selected 40 men of his

own regiment, and 40 of the 43rd under this Jemadar, as brave a soldier as ever stepped in and set out on what proved to be one of the most eventful marches ever undertaken of late years in India. As regards the force under his orders his own sepoy were Punjabi Mussalmans, a few being Pathans. Twenty were old soldiers and the rest were recruits who had been drilled for eight months, but had only fired a few rounds of ball cartridge at musketry practice. One of those, a boy of eighteen, had shewn the stuff a Punjabi, is made up by his coolness under fire and his wonderful shooting at close quarters. There was plenty of Snider ammunition at Tammu, and one hundred and sixty rounds per rifle were taken for the 40 men; but the sepoy of the 43rd were armed with Martini-Henry rifles and had only 50 rounds each. The transport taken consisted of three elephants, a few ponies, and some Cossiah coolies.

In the lightest marching order, the little column started on March 28th, and had only proceeded some seven miles when they were fired upon by Kahow Chins in ambuscade. These were quickly dispersed. Then the Manipuri soldiers in their white and black uniforms began to be seen first by three or four, then a dozen, and finally at Tingliban, the second stage from Tammu, one hundred were come across. This party fired some sixty shots at 300 or 400 yard's range, but did not venture to close quarters. Lieutenant Grant bivouacked at

^{Tengnoupal}
 Tingliban in the afternoon, but started again at 11 o'clock at night. After an hour's march the road was discovered to be blocked by eight or ten trees which had been felled so as to fall across the path. It was bright moonlight, but no enemy could be seen. Taking twenty men, he passed beyond the obstacles, which the Goorkhas with *Kukris* began to clear away. The Manipuris were on the hill above, but they so placed themselves that their fire passed harmless. They had no sentry placed, or they could have swept the path as the column halted when the barricade was first seen. The twenty men on their way up the hill side fired 40 or 50 shots, and then rushed the position from the flank. It proved to be a shelter trench 90 yards long, and was held by 150 men. These in their flight left some guns and accoutrements behind them.

In the morning the force arrived at Palel which was garrisoned by 200 Manipuris. These took to their heels and were pursued for three miles, three prisoners being taken. One of these proved most useful. He was the cook of no less a personage than the ^{Napier} Aprai Major who had that day been in command at Palel. This prisoner stated that his master had received a letter from the Maharaja, saying, that nine sahibs had been killed and that a *mem sahib* and a few officers escaped towards Assam.

"I did not like the news much," said Lieutenant Grant, in telling his story to one of his friends,

“but I did not believe it. I considered the matter and arguing that if the military authorities wished me to return they could easily recall me by a messenger from Tammu, I decided to push on. I thought I might find a fort of some kind in which I could entrench myself, leave my baggage and transport under a small guard and go out with the rest of my men, taking plenty of ammunition. In that way I believed I might afford help to the prisoners.” Having arrived at this conclusion, he wrote a letter addressed to Captain Presgrave, who would most likely be the officer sent up to Tammu, and informed him of the news he had heard and what he intended to do.

The brave officer, nothing daunted by the sad news of the massacre of English officers, and the shock that it must have imparted to British arms, commenced his onward march in the bright moonlight of the night of the 30th, and by dawn got to the villages which begin some four or five miles from Thobal, which place is only fourteen miles from Manipur on the south-east. His flanking parties drove a number of Manipuris before them, and he found himself in view of the open plain thousands of yards across from front to rear, and extending for miles from side to side. The road passed straight across this. On the right all was open but running parallel with the road on the left was a military line of walled compounds, each with two or three houses masked by trees or bamboos.

These compounds played a most important part in the fighting which occurred afterwards, as it was within one of them that a defensive position was finally taken up. Seeing a bridge burning, Lieutenant Grant hurried his men up, in order, if possible, to save it, and at the same time galloped on to reconnoitre. He reached the water-course, and then, without the least warning, fire was suddenly opened from the opposite side at a range of fifty yards.

Seeing the enemy in force Lieutenant Grant galloped back, getting a bullet through his coat. His career was nearly ended, as the ball bruised his back, but the wound was luckily a trifling one. Now came the time to test his men in earnest. They were in fighting formation, twenty being in firing line, ten in support of each flank, and forty with the baggage. The order was given to advance, and to use Grant's own words "they behaved beautifully. It was like a page out of the drill-book. There was a volley from the right party, and a rush from the left, and *vice versa*. We lost only one man in the first rush. He was shot through the head. I thought for a moment he was hanging back, but on reaching him saw that he was dead. The enemy were firing through loopholes in walls hidden by hedges. We got to within 100 yards of them, but a water-course was between us, and I could not tell their numbers. We lay down and fired for ten minutes, but made no impression. I went back to the supports on each flank and

ordered them to creep up wide of the first firing line, but, like brave fellows as they are, they jumped up, rushed forward right to the edge of the stream and began firing. The fighting line fixed bayonets and joined them. There was a cry from the left that the enemy were running, and then we plunged pellmell into the water-course. It was rather deep, and one little Goorkha disappeared altogether. For a second I myself got fast in weeds and was ignominiously hauled out by a jemadar, but we got across somehow. The Manipuris were seen in full flight, their white clothing making them excellent targets." On the enemy's left was a line of rifle pits, and in these numbers were caught like rats in a trap and bayoneted. On the right were the compound walls giving good shelter, but behind them lay a number of dead, shot through the head. There were 800 Manipuris holding this position. Lieutenant Grant then made for himself a position which he was enabled to hold against some thousands of men sent against him, although they had artillery with them. He occupied three compounds beyond the water-course, destroying most of the houses in them and cutting down the trees so as to form an abatis about the walls.

For the remainder of that day the enemy, who were seen swarming on the plain in front did nothing, but early next morning they were seen on the move on the road 800 yards away. Two rifle

shots were fired at them, and as the large crowd offered a good mark a man dropped each time. This was enough and they withdrew. At 3 P. M., a patrol reported, the Manipuris were coming up in great strength. The wall in advance of the entrenched camp was lined with sepoy's waiting patiently until the enemy were within 600 yards, and then giving them steady volleys. Again they retired. A little before four o'clock, they got two seven-pounder rifled guns into position on a hill exactly 1,000 yards from the wall and opened fire with common shell. They got the range in three shots and then began using shrapnel.

The sepoy's had no affection for the common shell with its noisy flight and loud report, shrapnel they laughed at. It seemed to them that the enemy were running short of powder as they did not continue with the first kind. The practice was good, but a few volleys from the Martinis at 1,000 yards killed some of the gunners and the guns were withdrawn to 1,500 yards, one only again coming into action. The shelling lasted up to 5 P. M., when the second attack was made on the left front. This was repulsed, and at sunset the Manipuris withdrew to their original position. They had absolutely failed to make any impression on the little column.

On April 6th Lieutenant Grant had to fight his third action, and the mettle of his sepoy's was then tried to the utmost. A little before six o'clock

in the morning his patrols reported the enemy on the move, and immediately their guns opened fire. Fifteen shells fell in and about the camp, wounding two of the elephants. At seven the guns ceased firing and their infantry advanced to the attack. Not until they were within 200 yards did Grant give the signal for fire to be opened, and then his men began pouring in steady volleys. These had the effect of making the Manipuris take such cover as was offered behind walls and trees. At 8 A. M., finding the attack was most pressed against his left front, Lieutenant Grant took ten Goorkhas, crept out along the water-course, enfiladed the walls on his left and in a few moments had cleared that side. This party was fired at by the Manipuris who were holding the village in his rear, but as the range was 600 yards the fire was harmless. At 11 A. M. no impression had been made on the camp, the sepoy being so well protected that they could fire accurately through the loopholes without exposing themselves. Lieutenant Grant now decided to try and clear his front a little. This time he took only six Goorkhas of the 43rd with their havildar. He himself was armed with a 16-bore breach-loader, double-barrelled, and his revolver. This party crept up the ditch between the road and the compounds, got to the corner and enfiladed the wall behind which were 100 of the enemy. They ran at once, but facing the corner, and cut off from it by a deep ditch, full of water, was a

wall five feet high, from which the party of Manipuris began firing. Luckily it was not loop-hold, so they had to expose themselves when aiming. For a quarter of an hour the Goorkhas had a fine chance of snap-shots at the heads as they were raised on the wall, and while their young commander was using his buck-shot cartridges with fine effect. At last the enemy, finding that exposure was almost certain death, sneaked away from this hot corner, and his immediate front being thereby made clear Grant returned to his entrenchments.

As an instance of plucky endurance, the case of the havildar with him may be quoted. He had received a bullet smasting the lower joint of his right thumb, but he had never let go his rifle nor complained of being wounded. His name is Gambhir Rai. Lieutenant Grant spoke in the highest terms of the way his men behaved in action and husbanded their ammunition throughout. There was no wild firing and the discipline was admirable, though thirty recruits were present. After the last reserve of ammunition had been served out he issued orders stopping all firing. The enemy were to be allowed to approach to within 100 yards before being greeted with volleys. The men were ordered to lie down under cover, one in every six being left as a look-out. The enemy re-opened fire, but their aim was as bad as ever. ~~The~~ look-out men shewed supreme contempt.

for their enemy, and not a man winced though the trees about were constantly being struck by bullets. As the after-noon wore on Grant told off his best shots at the loopholes to shoot steadily at such Manipuris as exposed themselves, and in this way a considerable number was accounted for. It was a trying time, but the enemy after the experience of the morning never made an organised rush upon the entrenchments. At sunset they slowly withdrew firing parting shots and the fighting was at an end.

Lieutenant Grant is the eldest son of Lieutenant-General Douglas Grant, Indian Staff Corps, who resides in London. He had obtained a commission in the Suffolk regiment from Sandhurst in 1882, and had served with that regiment in England and Ireland. After coming to India he sometimes remained at Fyzabad whence he joined the Madras staff corps in 1884. He was ordered to Mandalay 1886, and arrived shortly after it was occupied; he afterwards commanded detachments against dacoits around Mandalay and captured Theebaw's "Torture Elephant," along with seven others. Being invalided, he went to England in 1889, but returned last year and joined the 12th Madras regiment at its formation in 1890. His three memorable victories over the Manipuris have taken the world by surprise. A cloudlet, no bigger than a man's hand culminated into a mighty cloud that eventually burst out in thunder, storm, and

rain, but on such pitch dark horizon and over such destroying elements there was one small, but powerful luminary that presided over the firmament on high and prevented utter darkness by its lusture, and that luminary was the young but chivalrous Lieutenant Grant. His name will forever remain immortalised in the history of British India, ranking with such great heroes as Clive of Arcot, Sale of Jellalabad, and Edwardes of Mooltan. His calm self-possession, his presence of mind, and his dash and bravery in action are characteristic of a great hero. The Government of India has, as a reward of his valuable services, made him a Major of the British army ; and the Empress of India, who has ever shewn her aptitude to reward the most merited, has conferred on him the badge of Victoria Cross which is highly prized by all British soldiers.

On the occasion of the advance of General Graham, when charging at the head of his brave Thobal heroes, the entrenched stockade at Palel, Grant was the first who leaped into it and seeing a white flag hoisted on the air he immediately waived his hand to cease fire, believing that the enemy would surrender. But lo ! how was the gallant officer deceived ! Fire was immediately opened on him and he fell wounded by a Henri-Martini bullet at his neck ; but he instantly rose tied his neck as best as he could with his handkerchief and charged the enemy sword in hand, and never once minded for his wound till he saw that the enemy were completely vanquished.

His wound was a severe one but he had fortunately recovered. Even, if Providence has not reserved for him some more glorious exploits what he has vouchsafed to him already has earned for him undying fame. One could wish to breathe his last in the arms of victory after being the Hero of Thobal because as the Poet has it:—

“One crowded hour of glory is worth
An age without a name.”

Such “crowded hour of glory”. Grant had but he still survives, and who can say he has not been preserved for greater work and more fame.

CHAPTER IX.

THE OCCUPATION OF IMPHAL.

When the fate of the officers was not known the general opinion was that a dash be made with the available force in Assam and Cachar in view of promptly releasing them from the hands of the enemy. But the news of their massacre fell like a thunder-bolt on British India. Then was evident to all the utter futility of any hasty advance which would only have been prudent had the officers been known to be alive. Now that they were dead, and whatever could be done would not restore them to their life, all ideas of a precipitate advance were at once given up. A campaign was then begun in

right earnest. A simultaneous advance was planned to be made from the three sides of the doomed country. Some difficulties were experienced at the commencement in collecting coolies and transport animals, some of which had to be brought even from the far North-Western Provinces. As there had been no railways to the bases of operations, there were some unavoidable delays in collecting the necessary number of troops at the three starting places, but nevertheless all difficulties were adequately grappled with and the preparations were pushed on with praise-worthy swiftness and alacrity by the commanders of the columns. The one under Brigadier (now Major) General Collet who had been entrusted with the sole command of the expedition was composed of the 13th Bengal Infantry, four guns of No. 8 Mountain Battery, and the 36th Sikhs. Nigriting, a frontier village in Assam, was the place where the troops and all the officers with their transport at first gathered together before proceeding to Kohima, the first base of operation. Captain R. F. Allen, R. E., was the Field Engineer with this column. Captain Fitzgerald Assistant Commissary General, and Lieutenant Rice, Transport officer, Lieutenant W. L. Davidson, Assistant Transport officer, and Mr. Maccabbe, Political officer.

The Cachar column under Colonel Rennick was composed of 283 rifles of the 43rd Goorkhas, 100 of the 18th Bengal, 100 of the 42nd Goorkhas, 180 of

the Surma Valley Frontier Police, and two guns of No. 8 Mountain Battery.

The Tammu column, under Brigadier General Graham was composed of the two-fourth Goorkhas, the 12th Burma Infantry, two guns of No. 2 Mountain Battery, and 250 Mounted Police. A wing of the 4th King's Royal Rifles and two guns of the same battery.

The Kohima column, being the most distant of the three, commenced its march on Monday the 20th April. The Nagas were delighted at the coming overthrow of Manipur and covered the hills to see the departure of the column, as it majestically commenced its march with every circumstance of a marked parade. Mr. Davis, Deputy Commissioner, who had been a very popular officer with the Nagas, collected 1,700 of them as coolies and accompanied the expedition.

Throughout its march the column had not an opportunity to fire a single shot because there was none to oppose them. They marched from stage to stage as if they were moving in British India, and they only realised that they were in an enemy's country from their finding it to be wholly deserted, and the telegraph posts all thrown out and the wires cut into shreds. They were very much surprised to find Sengmai, where they heard greatest opposition will be offered completely deserted. Even though the column had not to fight, the circumstances under which it marched were

such as could weaken all, but only the most strongly-built. The heat was terrible and cholera broke out all along the line between Barak and Fenchugunge. To add to their misery it commenced to rain heavily, the soldiers were knee-deep in mud and water. As they carried no camp they cheerfully bivouacked on mud and water, the wet grass forming their bed of straws. Still they were undaunted, and were as spirited and full of vigour as at the commencement of their march.

The Silchar column occupied Naraingon^{Nyagun} on the 23rd April, four miles from Bishenpore, after forcing its way through the formidable Laimatol defile, where the enemy made a show of resistance. The guns were immediately brought to bear upon them, but the enemy in return first opened fire from the first stockade, but then bolted directly the fire of guns commenced to tell on them. Captain Cowley crowned the heights. The column was engaged from 9 A. M. to 3 P. M., climbing the heights and clearing away barricades and trees for over one mile. Captains Butcher and Cole diverted to the left to Nurigai, a very commanding strong-hold on a rock, which commands the road. The enemy fled fearing to be taken in the rear. A few volleys killed some of the Manipuris, and their commander was wounded and taken prisoner. There were no casualties on the side of the English. The operations were carried out by Captains Boileau and Dun, instructed by Colonel Rennick.

General Graham's Staff and the King's Royal Rifles, Head Quarters and Wing, left Tammu for Lockchao *en route* to Manipur on the 23rd, three days after General Collet commenced his march from Kohima.

He received news on the 25th that the enemy had a position barring his progress, and ordered a reconnaissance from Palel. Captain Drury of the 4th Goorkhas, who commanded the reconnaissance, sent word to say that he had hemmed in a large number of Manipuris and waited orders. The General then ordered up two guns of No. 2 Mountain Battery, and 200 rifles of the 4th Goorkhas as reinforcements. The battery opened fire at 1,000 yards, while Captains Drury and Carnegy advanced from both the north and the south, and finally rushed the position, when a hand-to-hand fight ensued. Nearly all the enemy were killed, those escaping were killed by the Mounted Infantry; 128 bodies were counted, besides those killed by the Mounted Infantry. Both the enemy's leaders were killed. How obstinately the men fought can best be known by a reference to the number of officers wounded; Captains Drury and Carnegy, Lieutenants Cox and Grant, and Subadar Major Kulputty Gurang were all severely wounded.

The Kohima, Cachar and Tammu columns all joined hands at Imphal on Monday, the 27th April, as was arranged. Colonel Rennick's advance Guards came in at 7 A. M. The Fort and Palace were found

deserted, and had evidently been gutted by the Manipuris, after the Regent's flight. Every thing lay about as if the departure had been very hurried.

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION.

The first step that General Collet took on his arrival at Imphal was to send a strong detachment under Captain Dun towards Chassad to hunt for the Regent and the Jubaraj. whither they had fled the day before the entry of British soldiers in Imphal. The old Tongal General was secured first, then the Regent and finally the Jubaraj was brought in on 23rd May, who was, strangely enough, loitering close to the British camp. A court, composed of Lieutenant Colonel St. John Mitchel, Major Ridgeway and Mr. Davis, Deputy Commissioner, was at once formed to try the princes. Much has been written by the Press in India against the composition of the Court and the mode of procedure therein, but no right-minded man can properly question the propriety of the sentences passed on the princes after earnest and mature deliberation by the highest Representative of Her Gracious Majesty the Queen-Empress of India in Council. The Jubaraj and the Tongal were the real murderers of British officers in cold blood,

and the Government was right in passing on them the highest penalty the law allows. The sentence of death passed on the Regent and the ten others, including the guards on the officers and their executioners was commuted to transportation, thus shewing that the Government of India was not disinclined to temper justice with mercy where that was open to them.

The execution of the Jubaraj and the Tongal took place on the 13th of August, at a quarter to five in the afternoon, near the polo ground and bazaar, and a short distance from where the former west gate stood. The ground at the execution was kept by 500 Rifles of the 2nd and the 43rd Goorkhas, forming a square around the gallows. Fifty Rifles of the 2nd Goorkhas escorted Tongal and fifty more of the 43rd escorted Tekendrajit from the Jail, and the Quarter Guard of the 43rd respectively, and meeting at the inner west gate in front of the Commissariat godown punctually at the time ordered they marched together to the scaffold. The remainder of the troops were kept in readiness in their lines to turn out suddenly if required. Two gallows were erected so that the Jubaraj and the Tongal faced each other. The Jubaraj walked down quite composedly and went up to the ladder steadily by himself; but the Tongal had to be carried down from the Jail, as he had been, ever since he was taken prisoner, unable to walk by himself, and sat on a stool on the platform

instead of standing upright. When all preparations had been carefully made and every thing was in readiness the signal was given and both men dropped together. Thus perished the perpetrators of the dreadful tragedy of the 24th March, who were alike traitors to their country and to humanity at large. Their bodies were left hanging for an hour, and after examination by a medical officer were taken down and the troops marched away. The arrangements were excellent and there was not the slightest hitch. The crowd was quiet except for a number of women, mostly relations, who made great lamentations and bewailings, for otherwise there was no disturbance.

Occasions had hardly arisen when the British Government was slow in recognising merits in their servants. Of the 80 heroes who composed the miniature army of Lieutenant Grant not one has been left unrewarded. Lieutenant Grant had himself spoken in the highest terms of the men who were under him, so much so that he attributed his unlooked-for success greatly to the gallantry and the power of endurance of the men under him. But the reward of none was equal to that which was granted to Lieutenant Grant, and which he so well merited.

In recognition of the heroism shewn, and the services rendered to the wounded soldiers while in the Residency, the Empress of India has conferred on Mrs. Grimwood the order of the

Golden Cross, which very few ladies in England have as yet the honour of possessing. But, however, great may be the honour that she might have received, and howsoever precious her rewards might be, nothing can compare with that she had sacrificed in India. The memory of her lamented husband will forever remain engraven on her heart, whom she will never forget be she in the company of royalty or bedecked in all the precious jewels of the world.

“Hush ! whisper the rest of the story and weep o’er
the far away grave,
For what is the gem of her glory compared with the
price that she gave ?”

A tremendous hurricane has just now past over Manipur. Sad it is to contemplate all the troubles that have come on this peaceful and interesting country and people through the faults of the few. The Government of India has, however, spared the country from annexation, and it is earnestly to be hoped that it will now develop in its natural way under its fostering care and guidance.



